

Anti-Fascist News



ANTI-FASCISM, NEO-PAGANISM, TRADITIONALISM

The World Without Forms

APRIL 7, 2017 | ANTIFASCISTFRONT | 7 COMMENTS

By Rhyd Wildermuth

I said to a friend, we see the darkness, and some go in.

It is the Abyss.

We have to find out what is there, to find out if there is meaning. And we see only the abyss. And some go mad. And some never return. And some —

And some, I said, come back wielding light against that darkness. Seeing nothing, we bring back fire, we light lamps, candles, torches. We hold light that isn't ours, as how else would any else see?

Terror often greets the far-off glances on the faces of those who return from the Abyss. The lone wanderers who walked boldly into the darkness past the boundary of fire- or street-light, the mad poet, the uncouth heretic, the unshowered witch: their reckless journeys are not celebrated when they return.

Like the ones who ‘walk away from Omelas,’ they did not know to where they were going, only somewhere not-here, not the streets full of opulent wealth and the joyous cries of liberation made possible by a founding horror. But unlike in Le Guin’s story, the city is the world, and there is nowhere else to go except back to those same streets, their eyes no longer glinting with the shallow laughter of civilization but nevertheless lit with fire.

It is their own fire, and it is a fire others are right to fear. It is a fire that can reforge the world.

I am what some might call an Egoist. I can also be described as a Nihilist, a mystic, an esotericist, a witch, a Pagan, an Anarchist, and also a Marxist. None of these labels actually mean anything—they are only useful when attempting to speak as the locals speak, to use the prescribed language of Capitol/Capital, treating ‘words that stay’ with the same fetishism which Marx ascribes to commodity-cum-currency.

It is generally easier to list what I reject (for those of you checking-off boxes on mental clipboards) than it is to begin the litany of what I embrace. Few have the time: there are stories that must be told for each thing before they can be understood, and such narration seems mere obfuscation to those for whom reductionism and essentialism (as endemic to the American ‘left’ as it is to the ‘right’) are unconscious requirements to get at the ‘truth.’

I will tell you what I do not like. I do not like racism or racialism; I do not like gender or genderism. I do not like property or propriety, nor do I like borders and what they define. Also, Capitalism and Liberal Democracy and Empire are my least favorite things in the world, along with their shadow, Fascism.

Here, though, I should remind you: “Fascism” means nothing at all. It is a word invoked by people overcome with a strong urge to shore up the ruins of Empire by recourse to even more tenuous concepts with even less material basis: Tradition, Race, Gender, Morals, the Nation. Though the words are mere sounds we make with our throats or symbols printed with ink or displayed on screens, they each serve to outline vaguely (and by their vagueness gain more power) ideas which nevertheless have great power in the realm of the human social.

Max Stirner called these ideas ‘spooks.’ Others would call these ‘constructs.’ I prefer to name them spectres or Egregores. They are also the mythic, and it’s the realm of the mythic I understand best, which is also the realm the Fascists are trying to take from us.



Spooks That Kill

Carl Jung gave a speech in 1936 in which he suggested a “Wotanic spirit” had begun to inhabit the National Socialists, as if the people had become possessed by a god:

Perhaps we may sum up this general phenomenon as Ergriffenheit — a state of being seized or possessed. The term postulates not only an Ergriffener (one who is seized) but, also, an Ergreifer (one who seizes). Wotan is an Ergreifer of men, and, unless one wishes to deify Hitler— which has indeed actually happened — he is really the only explanation.

Jung invokes his theory of gods as pre- and un-conscious archetypal drives to defend his thesis, but like much of the rest of Jung’s work, it’s always unclear whether he believed there was not really a god there. But Jung does not quite mean what we generally think of as a god. Wotan is a “buried drive” within the Germanic people, one which essentially haunts the ‘race’ until it becomes manifest.

“Because the behaviour of a race takes on its specific character from its underlying images, we can speak of an archetype “Wotan.” As an autonomous psychic factor, Wotan produces effects in the collective life of a people and thereby reveals his own nature....It is only from time to time that individuals fall under the irresistible influence of this unconscious factor.”

Jung’s racial essentialism here is tragic and prefigures the biological and genetic essentialism which now dominates Western thought. However, the concept of a mass possession by an unconscious form fits incredibly well with what we know of Nationalism.

Consider the World Trade Center attacks in 2001 in the United States. After the attacks, people experienced (and were diagnosed with) trauma from watching the explosions on television, so much so that some (including otherwise sane and clear-thinking friends of mine) for a little while believed they had either actually been present at the event or had a close friend or family member within the destroyed towers. Worse, many otherwise virulently anti-war people suddenly regained national ‘pride,’ literally waving flags with such civic devotion that one would have thought their life depended upon it.

Devotion to the Nation after such traumatic events often takes on both a religious quality (similar to that of evangelical Christians) while displaying symptoms of mass hysteria. The Nation appears to haunt the actions of the individuals, manifesting and reifying itself as if by possession or seizing.

What Jung noticed regarding the possession of the German people by “Wotan” is this same process. And while one need not believe it was Wotan who possessed his people (I do not—I’ve asked him myself), Jung’s assertion that a mythic force can operate on the psyche is hardly a unique idea. The same function was described by Max Stirner as ‘spooks,’ ideological and philosophical forms which exert influence when they are unconsciously accepted as really-existing.





Spook, Spectre, Egregore

Jung's theory of archetypes—as well as Stirner's theory on Spooks, may have been influenced by an occult theory regarding near-deific spirits known as egregores. An egregore (greek for 'watcher') is a spirit composed of the memories, knowledge, personality, and intentions of a group, which either arises organically from the activities and interactions of the group or is constructed willfully by the group.

Egregores could be called 'group minds,' though they exist autonomously (like Jung's archetypal Wotan) and maintain the cohesion, survival, and collective identity of a group beyond the individual goals of each member. Unlike an archetype, an egregore does not spring from the unconscious/pre-conscious mind, but rather the myriad actions and interactions of those within in. Unlike a god, an egregore is not something one worships or necessarily invokes. They can be constructed, but after their construction the apparent life they take on is much more complex than what they were constructed to be.

A more accurate explanation may be to say that they are real-ised; brought from the realm of infinite possibility, the world without forms, into the more finite realm of social existence. Yet another theory is that they become inhabited after-the-fact by pre-existing spirits, similar to the way many animistic cultures build shrines as houses that benevolent spirits (or fairies, etc.) will want to move into.

Like Jung's 'Wotan' and Stirner's Spook (and to some degree Derrida's 'Spectre'), the Egregore describes the apparent realness of a thing despite its disconnection from the material world. There is no 'there' there, and yet it functions always as if there was, manifesting itself in the actions of those who live within its realm of influence or meaning. And it thus acts also as if it were a god, making demands upon its followers who constantly (and often unconsciously) manifest its existence.

This same process has been described by other means by post-colonialist theorists. Dipesh Chakrabarty, particularly, proposes in his introduction to *Provincializing Europe* that it is precisely European exceptionalism that prevents us from seeing how those of us in Liberal Democratic societies still "inhabit these forms even as we classify ourselves as modern or secular." Similarly, Frantz Fanon and James Baldwin speak to the way that belief in whiteness and its psychological manifestations seem to inhabit those who, in Baldwin's words, "believe they are white."

One need not necessarily accept a supernatural explanation for the way the mythic manifests as-if it is

real in order to comprehend this idea. Benedict Anderson's formulation of the Nation as an 'imagined community' also points to the same mythic and Egregoric functioning. For him, the Nation is a modern constructed form creating an indefensible (yet fully-manifest) sense of (false) horizontal kinship with complete strangers, as Anderson says, making "it possible, over the past two centuries, for so many millions of people not so much to kill as willing die for such limited imaginings."

America exists; yet we cannot point merely to the constitution of the United States, nor to its government and institutions, soldiers and politicians and police, and say: this is America. America exists within the psyche of Americans, constantly reproduced through self-description and unconscious acceptance of its goals, desires, and inevitability. America is an egregore, a god-form, inhabiting the psyche of its individual constituents, like Jung's Wotan: "...an autonomous psychic factor, ...produc[ing] effects in the collective life of a people..."

The Fascists Know What We Prefer To Forget

Race, Gender, and all other 'identity' categories function this same way. Gays imagine themselves part of a 'gay community,' yet there is no such thing, only an imagined kinship with people who just happen to like sex with people who have the same genitals as themselves. A horrific attack on people who call themselves gay (such as the Pulse massacre in Orlando) thus manifests in individual gays elsewhere (as was the case for myself and many of my gay friends) as an attack on us as well.

We see this egregoric manifestation even stronger in whiteness. Whiteness has no material basis, yet it does not need one to manifest through the social interactions of humans. Whiteness 'possesses' the white person, and appears to inhabit their interactions with people possessed by other egregoric racial categories (Black, etc.) regardless of their oppositional nature. In fact, the conflict and tension between egregores only further refines and entrenches their influence and power.

Neither the conservative Right nor most of the liberal or radical Left challenge these egregores. Instead, they strengthen and re-invest these egregores with power by insisting they are real and meaningful fields of social struggle (regardless of their final goals). We see this most tragically on the Left, which generally accepts the constructed nature of identities, yet also insists identity is a valid (if not foundational) field of political struggle.

Consider the problem of Gender. Most Leftists accept Judith Butler's proposition that gender is performative, not essential or biological (likewise the Egoist position). Yet, particularly on the "Social Justice" Left, essentialism and a fear of straying too far from Liberal Democratic forms creates a contradictory position, seen particularly in the arguments around trans women. On the one hand, Leftists insist woman is a constructed category, yet then assert that trans women are women. That is, woman is constructed, but in order to liberate another constructed category, trans women (as category) are absolutely (essentially) part of a woman (as category), making both again essentialist. Similarly, maleness is a category that the Left generally seeks to make irrelevant, but then the Left reduces men to an essential category in which every man essentially causes exploitation, violence, and oppression ("YESALLMEN").

Even if it were only the Left attempting to define the boundaries of these egregoric categories, we would find ourselves in an interminable deadlock. Unfortunately, there is a much stronger and less self-conscious current which already understands the great power these egregores have over the actions of

humans.

A brief glance at the Nazi project is probably sufficient for us to grasp how Fascism not only is more comfortable with the egregoric nature of these concepts, but also understands how best to manipulate them. Nazi theorists (social, occult, legal, scientific, etc.) cobbled together a new mythic reality for Germany quite quickly. Tibetan and Hindu spirituality, Nordic and Germanic folklore, and general occult studies as well as previously oppositional and antagonist political, social, and scientific forms all became part of the egregore of Nazism, seizing the mythic imagination of a (likewise mythic) Nation.

Consider: before the Nazis, the Aryan race was a mere fringe scientific theory. During the Nazi ascension, the Aryan race was a thing, alive, 'self-evident.' So, too, Germany itself: suddenly a nation created only three decades before arose fully-formed with an ancient history as if it had always been there.

Did the Nazi theorists actually believe their own mythic creation? Or were they consciously creating something new? It's impossible to know. The same question could be asked of Lenin and Stalin: did they really believe in the existence of the Worker?

Or more controversially regarding the identity politics of the Left: gays did not exist as a category in the 1800's, nor did trans people. When the political category/egregoric identity of 'gay' and 'trans' arose, suddenly they were self-evident, alive, meaningful, and strangest of all: 'true.' Did those who constructed gayness and trans identity know they were making something up? How many who embrace these identities (unless they've really read Foucault) even realize that they do not stretch back into pre-history, let alone before the 20th century?

The point here is not to unravel the nightmare of Left identity politics, only to show how Leftists unconsciously do the same thing that Fascists consciously do. Leftists construct identities and egregores without any reference to the material world, yet then quickly accept them as if they have always existed, just as a Nationalist embraces the Nation and a White Supremacist embraces the White Race.

Leftism (and anti-fascism) as it currently exists is thus insufficient for combating the mythic power of Fascism until we acknowledge how much of this mythic, egregoric power we've not only ceded to Fascists, but then clumsily mimic.



The World Without Forms

An essay by Alexander Reid Ross (<https://antifascistnews.net/2017/04/05/egomania-a-response-to-my-critics-on-the-post-left/>) recently warned against the danger of “Post-Left,” Egoist, mythic, and anti-civilizational thought. What these “potential intersections” with Fascism all have in common, however, is a rejection of the egregoric spooks over which the Left and Fascists are currently warring. Also, they all have at least an apparent understanding of the mechanisms by which the egregoric functions, and they each assert the freedom of the individual over these forms as a primary goal.

Ross’s essay suggests that these positions seem close to the border past which all is fascist. That apparent proximity, though, is not what he suspects it to be. Rather, the extreme distance of most Leftism from the mythic—and its long complicity with Liberal Democratic secular exceptionalism—makes these non- and anti-fascist positions seem ‘close’ to Fascism.

Leftism—especially American anti-fascism—has been so lost in the world of identities and forms that it has forgotten that they are only merely that: forms. Thus, any who reject the world of forms, or create new ones, will be seen as immediately suspect.

Were the current forms (Liberal Democracy, Capitalism, the Nation, Gender, Race, etc.) worth keeping around, then this error would not be so catastrophic. Some are certainly anti-fascist only because it threatens Liberal Democracy, and perhaps it is no longer true to say that Leftism (at least in its American iterations) is anti-imperialist or anti-capitalist any longer, regardless of how much it claims otherwise.

If, however, we are anti-fascists because we are also pro-something else, something besides the current egregoric forms which lead only to exploitation, oppression, and the destruction of the earth, then we must stop looking away from the mythic power we have ceded to the Fascists.

We can see how we’ve done this by looking at one of the symptoms that anti-fascists use to diagnose whether someone is a Fascist: the Black Sun. Though proximity doesn’t prove causation, this is generally a good rule of thumb. However, little to no attention is ever given to why Fascists invoke the Black Sun.

The secret of the Black Sun is actually quite simple, and it’s one that Fascists do not own. Stare at the sun in the sky and something odd happens. It appears first to turn deep red, and then goes black and starts to spin as your retina burns. It also sears itself as an after-image, lingers there for hours (if not days), and creates the perception that there is actually nothing behind the sun. It appears to go flat as it moves, revealing a deep Abyss as if all light, and all reality is merely a black hole.

I do not suggest every white boy and girl who puts an image of the Black Sun as their iPhone background has experienced the same mystical transformation that medieval alchemists name *nigredo*; nor do I assert that it is an Abyssal truth limited to mystical traditions or European-derived thought (the Sufis and many animist traditions describe a similar experience). Still, it should intrigue us that in at least one Fascist strain, a rite exists which inducts the initiate into the nihilist/spiritual world without forms.

From that world, through such an initiation, it is easy to transcend societal restraints and enter into the pre-formal realm of perception. Outside the constraints of socially-constructed identity and morality,

any new thought is possible and any new form is acceptable specifically because ‘possible’ and ‘acceptable’ no longer apply. More so, the experience strengthens the will of the initiate: the vision was survived, the mind intact.

Those who’ve studied and felt the inebriating mix of mythic power and indomitable will evinced by fascists like Jack Donovan and the Wolves of Vinland will understand my meaning here. Donovan has been able to create an intoxicating, egregoric, mythic conception of the world, cobbling together fragments of the past with terrifyingly violent new ideologies which are pristine in their coherence. There is raw, seductive, violent power here that functions on the ‘primal’ (pre-conscious, libidinal) level against which anti-fascists have no other defense except no-platforming.



Reclaiming What We’ve Thrown Away

If I here seem full of praise for something so horrifying, it is not because I am, but because you may have become so separated from your own mythic power that you’ve forgotten you can do this too, towards a more affirming and fair world rather one of hierarchy and hatred.

I suspect we shun this power for two reasons. First, anyone returning from the Abyss with such mythic visions, transcending the egregores by which the rest of us are ruled, will always be initially marked as a heretic or an outcast. Only when we find others who have seen the same things or who find meaning in these new dreams can such mystics find acceptance. The other reason? We’ve so long ago ceded to others our power to make the world that we are more happy to leave such delvings to the Fascists than realize *we are complicit in our own enchainment*.

The ‘world without forms,’ where we can again reclaim our power, is what Stirner and the Egoists embrace. It is also what Bataille sought, as did his close friend, the Jewish mystic Walter Benjamin. From that world we see both the infinite possibility of human liberation and the infinite delusions under which we have for too long struggled. It is also where we can learn how to be Walter Benjamin’s “real state of emergency” which will eventually make Fascism untenable.

The Nation is a false thing that only has power because we give it power. Gender, race, class, religion, morals—even the self itself—are all constructs. Civilization is a spook, one to which we are always subject because we believe there is such a thing as civilization, because other people believe there is such a

thing as civilization, and because all of us fail to remember that civilization is just an idea in our heads that causes us to cohere around it and give it more power. Thus, the Fascist who warns that civilization is under threat from Islam, or trans people, or Cultural Marxism—as well as the Liberal-Leftist who warns that civilization is under threat from Fascism—are both still merely fighting for control over the egregore of Civilization.

Any anti-fascism which seeks to break not only the power of the Fascists but also the power of the forms the Fascists wish to control must refuse to accept the forms themselves.

Race, Gender, the Nation, Civilization—these are not our forms, they are forms which enchain us, they do not exist in the world we wish to build, and we must stop pretending otherwise. Instead, we must make new forms while always conscious that they are only just forms, forms we can change at will because it is our will which births them.

We must also refuse to cede the mythic—and the embrace of the self—to the Fascists. The ‘post-leftists’ and the Egoists and those who’ve read Bataille, and also those who’ve read Baldwin or Fanon or Chakrabarty, and especially all those who would dare walk past the forest’s edge in darkness and find there new truths, regardless the consequences—it is to them where we must look for the rituals which will free us all. It is them, and nothing else, who can finally exorcise Fascism’s spectre from our world.

Rhyd Wildermuth



Rhyd Wildermuth is the co-founder and managing editor of Gods&Radicals (<https://godsandrads.org/>). He co-edited, along with Lia Hunter, the most recent issue of A Beautiful Resistance, “Left Sacred.

He can be supported on Patreon (<https://www.patreon.com/Paganarch>), and is currently in Rennes, France, where he is very happy.

Get the latest copy of A Beautiful Resistance here. (<https://godsandrads.org/publications/>)

◀ CARL JUNG ◀ GENDER ◀ LEFTISM ◀ MAX STIRNER ◀ MYTH ◀ NAZI
GERMANY ◀ POST-LEFT ◀ RHYD WILDERMUTH

7 thoughts on “The World Without Forms”

1. Pingback: [Beasty Brawn Over Beauty? | Rosamond Press](#)

2. **Erick Parker** says:

APRIL 11, 2017 AT 10:15 AM

“Leftism (and anti-fascism) as it currently exists is thus insufficient for combating the mythic power of Fascism until we acknowledge how much of this mythic, egregoric power we’ve not only ceded to Fascists, but then clumsily mimic.”

It’s about damn time you guys figured this out. You’re being too kind to yourselves though. The truth is that you not only “ceded” ground to Fascists, you helped settle and cultivate that ground right alongside them. Remember: Fascists don’t tend toward intellectualism, so a big chunk of the theoretical work YOU did for them, and they just adapted it to the social environment.

Those stodgy ol’ conservatives you like to pretend are fascists and violently assault could have told you this decades ago. Want to know who also could have told you? Religious people centuries ago, who adhered to a system destroyed not by Fascists but by Progressives. You guys.

50% of the blame for Donald Trump is on the Left.

3. Pingback: [Barbarians in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction – GODS & RADICALS](#)

4. Pingback: [To Spite The Face: a review of Insurgent Supremacists by Matthew N. Lyons – GODS & RADICALS](#)

5. Pingback: [To Spite The Face: A review of Insurgent Supremacists by Matthew N. Lyons | Anti-Fascist News](#)

6. Pingback: [Anti-fascism and the Left’s Euro-Secular Arrogance – GODS & RADICALS](#)

7. **x** says:

SEPTEMBER 8, 2018 AT 2:46 PM

not sure that i understand this: ‘Jung’s racial essentialism here is tragic and prefigures the biological and genetic essentialism which now dominates Western thought.’

how is he prefiguring anything? He’s talking after the Nazis have already taken power. Do you mean that our current understanding of culture is Jungian? Please explain.